

[Russian Peasant Fables]

Duplicate

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

STATE NEW YORK

NAME OF WORKER Herman Spector

ADDRESS 701 Crotona Park North

DATE

SUBJECT RUSSIAN PEASANT FABLES (MORRIS SCHOENBERG)

1. Date and time of interview Several interviews
2. Place of interview
3. Name and address of informant Mr. Morris Schoenberg 674 Jefferson Place, Bronx.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant. Mr. M. Spector 1902 East 18th St. Bklyn, N. Y.
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

Above

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6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

This is dingy two-room apartment in old wooden private house. After bell on porch is rung vigorously, persistently, and despairingly, proprietor of house comes to open it and directs questioners up flight of stairs where informant lives with wife. The apartment is not untidy, but breathes the forlorn mustiness of the furnished room house.

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FORM C [Text of Interview (Unedited)?]

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1.

Once a peasant and his wife was working in the fields, the baby they left on the wagon, and when it comes dinner-time the wife goes to take the baby to give it milk. She takes out the breast, so all of a sudden a snake comes out of the grass and gets hold of the other breast and it drinks the milk. So the wife screams and the peasant rushes to get the wise man of the village. When he sees what is doing he takes the baby away and he puts a looking-glass next to the breast, so the snake, seeing the other breast there, gets jealous and he lets go. It is to show you it don't pay to be greedy.

2.

Once there was three students, one was a clockmaker, one was a doctor, one was an astronomer. They finished the school and was ready to go out in the world. So they were walking along and they came to a farm, so they asked the farmer to let him sleep there, so he said all right. They were sitting on the porch and the astronomer he looks up and says, it is a wonderful night, all the stars are in the sky. But the farmer says it will rain. How do you know this, the astronomer asks. Because the farmer says, I saw the pig take some straw and that shows it will rain. So sure enough, it rained. While the doctor was sitting, 2 he saw some kids making potatoes on a fire in the fields, and they picked them out half-raw and ate them. You will be sick, he says to the farmer's boy, who ate many of them. But at night, the boy lays with his belly next to the stove and the next morning he wakes up he is fine. So I didn't tell you about the watchmaker. He asks the farmer what time it is. The farmer says twelve o'clock. Hod do you know, you have no clock. So the farmer says, I just heard the rooster crow, and that means it is twelve o'clock. So the watchmaker looks, and sure enough, it says on his watch twelve o'clock.

***** MUCH BETTER INSIDE

In Russia, you know, dey didn't have no doctors, only dey got barbers. So it happened to a man he got a cold, so he goes to de barber and he says: I got a heavy cold, what should I do? De barber tells him to take alcholol what you rub, he should rub it in good, de cold will go away. So he goes to de turkish baths, he sweats himself out, and he drinks a schnapps. De next day he is better. So de barber says well, you done what I said? No, he [tells?] him, I done still better. If you tell me it is good to smear outside, I know it in mare good if it is inside, so I had a schnapps and now I am better.

***** HE'S A EJJICATED MAN

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Me, I know so many stories but I don't remember. Why if you want stories you don't listen to Uncle Don, he is over de radio for children but I enjoy too. One story he tells is beautiful; it is before Christmas so he tells about toys. De train is packed wid all kinds toys so he makes how de train goes: ticktock, ticktock, den he makes tiss, shtiss, shitiss and de train is goin'. - Now de train can't go is too much toys on it, it is a toy train so he makes slow, shiss, shiss...Such a finah mahn, a tirah (precious) mahn; such a ejjicated mahn. At nine o'clock on de radio you shouldn't miss it.